



Flathead National Forest

650 Wolfpack Way

Kalispell, MT 59901

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News Release

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Prescribed Fire Project Planned on Swan Lake Ranger District

KALISPELL, MT – March 11 – The Swan Lake Ranger District of the Flathead National Forest is planning to conduct several prescribed fires this spring, when weather, fuel conditions, and air quality become favorable. Smoke may be visible from various places in the Flathead Valley, Flathead Lake and the Swan Valley areas.

Each project follows a Prescribed Fire Burn Plan. The prescribed fire project is located and designed to be controlled to reduce the potential for adverse effects, or to escape as a wildland fire. This project will be in compliance with Montana air quality standards and coordinated with Montana State Department of Environmental Quality to reduce the impacts of smoke to our neighbors, cooperators, and surrounding communities.

Prescribed fire description:

Gunderson Prescribed Fire – 206 acres are planned for ignition in the Gunderson creek drainage off of MT HWY 35 near Yellow Bay. The purpose of this project is to reduce fuels adjacent to the Wildland Urban Interface as well as reduce the risk for high-severity wildfires.

Meadow Smith Area – This project includes under burning timber stands located within the Meadow and Smith Creek areas of the Swan Valley. These treatments will use prescribed fire for fuels reduction, vegetation regeneration, and wildlife habitat improvement.

Haskill Mountain Area – This treatment includes a 36-acre broadcast burn as well as burning piled slash from the Porter-Mount timber sale. Logging slash from previously logged areas will be treated with fire to reduce hazardous fuels as well as create favorable conditions for natural regeneration of plant and tree species.

Bigfork Area – Prescribed burning is planned on the Swan Lake Ranger Station Compound in Bigfork. Fuels consist of grass and pine needle litter around the administrative site. Smoke will be visible within the town of Bigfork but is expected to be short duration.

Pile Burning – Hand or machine piles are located in several locations across the district as a result of but not limited to: logging, hazardous fuels reduction in the urban interface, hazard tree removal, and trail or road construction. These piles are burned to reduce the fuel loads in these areas. These piles are strategically burned based on their location, access, and weather conditions.

Smoke may be visible in these areas until the burn area receives significant precipitation.

For additional information about these projects contact the Swan Lake Ranger District in Bigfork at 406-837-7500.

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